

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 141437Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2679
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
USIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2407

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SY
SUBJECT: SYRIAN PRESS SUMMARY FOR APRIL 13, 1977

1. DAMASCUS DAILIES LED WITH STORIES INCLUDING SPECIAL REPORT FROM WASHINGTON ON US STRATEGY TO PROMOTE ME PEACE AND PREDICTION OF IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS RE SOUTH LEBANON AND IMPLEMENTATION CAIRO AGREEMENT. THAWRA HEADLINED, "LEBANON TO WITNESS IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS DURING CURRENT WEEK. EFFORTS TO CONCENTRATE ON TWO MATTERS: TREATMENT OF SITUATION IN THE SOUTH AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT."

2. EDITORIALS ON LEBANON STATED THAT IDEA OF "CONCLUSIVE RESULTS" IN SOUTH MUST BE RULED OUT BY ALL PARTICIPANTS THERE ALONG WITH IDEA OF ACHIEVING POLITICAL GAINS
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BY ATTEMPTS INCREASE TENSION IN SOUTH. CONTINUATION OF INDEPENDENT POWER CENTERS ("STATES") IN LEBANON CALLED UNACCEPTABLE. "THE LEBANESE STATE UNITED IN ITS ARMY AND ECONOMY AND REPRESENTED BY PRES. SARKIS MUST BE SUBSTITUTE FOR ALL 'STATES;' AND ALLEGIANCES TO LEBANON MUST BE SUBSTITUTE FOR ALL OTHER ALLEGIANCES." ANOTHER EDITORIAL STATED SITUATION IN SOUTH IMPROVING BUT CAUTIONED THAT

INSTABILITY THERE STILL THREATENS SECURITY THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. IT CALLED FOR "FREEZING" SITUATION IN SOUTH UNTIL LEBANESE NATIONAL ARMY CREATED. EDITORIAL TERMED THIS STEP AS THE "BASIC GUARANTEE, PERHAPS THE ONLY ONE FOR CONCLUDING ISSUE OF SOUTH LEBANON IN MANNER FAVORABLE TO LEBANON'S UNITY." YET ANOTHER EDITORIAL WARNED THAT "IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT SHOULD NOT BE BARRIER TO BUILDING INSTITUTIONS OF LEBANESE STATE, JUST AS BUILDING THE INSTITUTIONS SHOULD NOT HINDER IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT."

3. IN SPECIAL STORY FROM WASHINGTON TISHRIIN REPORTED THAT US ME POLICY STILL "VAGUE." ARTICLE LISTED SEVERAL POINTS TO SUPPORT THIS CONTENTION INCLUDING:

A. CARTER HAS YET TO MEET WITH SEVERAL OF AREA'S LEADERS.

B. US HAD EXPECTED RABIN GOVT. TO FALL AND THIS LIKELY TO MAKE DIFFERENCE IN US CALCULATIONS BUT US MUST AWAIT RESULTS OF ISRAELI ELECTIONS. (STATEMENT OF "HIGH-LEVEL" DEPT. OFFICIAL CITED: "THE ALLEGED MODERATION OF RABIN GOVT. DOES NOT HELP MUCH BECAUSE ANY MEASURE HIS GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS WILL BE INTERPRETED AS LARGE CONCESSION, WHEREAS PRESENCE OF EXTREMIST SUCH AS PERES AT TOP OF ISRAEL'S RULING PARTY WILL AID ATTAINMENT OF VIABLE AGREEMENT SINCE NO ONE CAN ACCUSE HIM OF MAKING CONCESSIONS OR OF RESPONDING TO AMERICAN PRESSURE.")

C. US ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT WANT REVEAL ITS COMPLETE VISUALIZATION ME SETTLEMENT BEFORE HOLDING FURTHER CONTACTS
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WITH SOVIET LEADERS.

4. EDITORIAL IN THAWRA ON LIKELY NEW ISRAELI LEADERS AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD PALESTINIANS MADE POINT THAT NO CHANGE COULD BE EXPECTED IN ISRAELI NOTION THAT PALESTINIAN INTERESTS "CAN BE PROTECTED WHEREAS PALESTINIAN STATE CAN NEVER BE ESTABLISHED BECAUSE IT CONTAINS SEEDS OF ISRAEL'S DESTRUCTION." EDITORIAL CONCLUDED THAT ARABS MUST INSIST UPON TOTAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PALESTINIAN NATIONAL STATE UNDER LEADERSHIP OF PLO. COMMENT: MENTION OF STATE UNDER LEADERSHIP OF PLO MORE EXPLICIT ON SUBJECT OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS THAN USUAL MEDIA LINE.
PELLETREAU

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